

# Boulevard Sentinel



Bars would stay open until 4 a.m. in selected California cities under a bill now making its way through the state legislature. | Photo Daisy Barringer/Thrillist

## **NELA city councilmembers oppose Sacramento's latest drive to keep bars open until 4 a.m.**

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By T.A. Hendrickson

For the fourth time since 2017, State Senator Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco) is championing a “4 a.m. bar bill” that would let local governments in selected California cities participate in a five-year pilot program to extend last call from 2 a.m. currently to 4 a.m.

As in years past, Assemblymember Wendy Carrillo, who represents Northeast Los Angeles, is a co-author of the bill – [SB 930](#).

And once again, the L.A. City Council has voted to pass [a resolution](#) opposing Sacramento's drive for extended bar hours. The vote, on Aug. 5, was 10-2. Joining the majority in opposition to

SB 930 were the three councilmembers who represent communities in NELA – Gil Cedillo (CD 1), Mitch O’Farrell (CD 13) and Kevin de León (CD 14). The resolution was introduced by Councilmember Paul Koretz (CD 5) and seconded by City Council President Nury Martinez (CD 6).

In 2019, the L.A. City Council passed a similar resolution, [helping to kill that year’s version](#) of the 4 a.m. bar bill.

This year, state legislators behind SB 930 have tried to blunt the impact of L.A.’s disapproval by removing L.A. from the list of cities in the bill where drinking until 4 a.m. would be allowable. (Long Beach and Sacramento were also omitted due to local objections and Fresno [has asked](#) to be removed)

Still, SB 930 includes nearby West Hollywood, as well Cathedral City, Coachella, Oakland, Palm Springs and San Francisco. In those cities, mayors or city councils have previously expressed interest in a 4 a.m. last call. SB 930 is also supported by alcohol- and hospitality-industry groups.

Proponents of the bill argue that the issue is about “local control,” in that the bill would only apply to cities that want extended hours and set their own rules for when and where the extra hours of drinking would take place.

Proponents have also argued that extra drinking hours are needed to help drinking venues recover from the pandemic’s business disruptions. “We need to give them every possible tool to help them survive – including allowing them to stay open until 4 a.m.,” said Wiener in [a press release](#) announcing SB 930.

Those arguments have been dismissed by the L.A. City Council and other opponents SB 930, including [alcohol-industry watchdog groups](#) and the California Association of Highway Patrolmen. Local control over drinking is a fiction, they say, because drunk driving, domestic violence and other harms from drinking would not be confined to the cities where extra hours of drinking are allowed. Moreover, they say, the risks to health and safety from more drinking outweigh any potential economic gain.

“There is no such thing as local control in alcohol policy, inasmuch as the harm from one city’s decision to change last-call times splashes over every abutting local jurisdiction,” reads the L.A. City Council resolution.

SB 930 is now making its way through the state legislature. Time will tell if a majority of Sacramento lawmakers agree with the majority of L.A. lawmakers that a 4 a.m. last call is bad idea.